

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE SCALISE

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 16, 2017

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 551, and YEA on Roll Call No. 552.

HONORING BLAIRE BARTLETT

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 16, 2017

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and thank my outgoing Deputy Chief of Staff, Blaire Bartlett.

Raised in the small town of Westerville, Ohio, Blaire Marie Bartlett grew up with a desire for enriching the lives of others. After graduating from Westerville North High School, Blaire enrolled in Spring Hill College on a golf scholarship where she later obtained a B.A. in Hispanic Studies and a B.S. in International Studies. Subsequently, former Congressman Jim Walsh hired Blaire as his Executive Assistant. After working in various offices, both on- and off-Hill, Blaire joined my staff in 2015 within weeks of my swearing-in.

I have seen first-hand just how vital an asset Blaire Bartlett is. She is the glue that holds an office together. She brings strength, intelligence, poise, and humor to a job in which those qualities are in high demand, but low supply. Her incredible work ethic has made my office function better than a well-oiled machine. Furthermore, Blaire's selfless passion for animal welfare and human rights is refreshing to see in a town where many think only of themselves.

Mr. Speaker, after spending almost 12 years working in Congress, Blaire is ready for a new chapter in her life. I will miss having her and her dog, Monkey, in my office each day. Nonetheless, I am profoundly grateful for everything she has done for me, my staff, and the citizens of New York's 11th Congressional District.

RECOGNIZING STAFF SERGEANT RICHARD B. HUNTER ON RECEIVING THE AIR FORCE CROSS

HON. MATT GAETZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 16, 2017

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to pay tribute to Staff Sergeant Richard B. Hunter upon being awarded the Air Force Cross, the second highest military decoration that may be awarded to a member of the United States Air Force.

While deployed as a combat controller in November 2016, Staff Sergeant Hunter heroically and without regard for his personal safety, maximized effects on the battlefield by integrating air assets, employing precision fires, and protecting the wounded with his own body, saving the lives of his teammates.

As friendly forces entered the village, they were ambushed by heavy machine gun fire from insurgents. Staff Sergeant Hunter immediately identified the enemy locations and directed multiple "danger-close" strikes so close the team was blasted by dirt.

While under enemy fire, Staff Sergeant Hunter shielded the wounded with his body and provided suppressing fire with his rifle. Simultaneously, he coordinated close air support missions, deconflicted airspace, and maximized fire support from the overhead gunships.

While attempting to maneuver out of the kill zone, Staff Sergeant Hunter continued to accurately direct "danger-close" engagements on the massing enemy forces. Due to the smoke being so thick the team couldn't see, Sergeant Hunter used the overhead aircraft to direct them through the village.

At great risk to his life, Staff Sergeant Hunter acted to protect and recover his wounded teammates. While under heavy fire, he was able to direct air strikes via a radio in one hand, and use the other to drag the wounded to safety.

Staff Sergeant Hunter controlled 31 "danger-close" missions resulting in an estimated 27 enemies eliminated and 3 vehicles destroyed, with the closest precision strike 9 feet away.

The courage shown by this dedicated Special Tactics Combat Controller is a true testament of his character. Staff Sergeant Hunter has displayed selfless commitment to service and sacrifice.

The exceptional skill that Staff Sergeant Hunter demonstrated resulted in 57 total lives saved. Through his extraordinary heroism, superb airmanship, and aggressiveness in the face of the enemy, Staff Sergeant Hunter reflected the highest credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

The entire Northwest Florida community is immensely proud of our District's tradition of military service and support for all those who bravely serve our Nation.

On behalf of the United States Congress, it is a true honor to recognize Staff Sergeant Richard B. Hunter upon this most notable distinction.

He is truly a remarkable man, and I thank him for his selfless service to his country.

KEITH SWERDFEGER TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 16, 2017

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Keith Swerdfeger of Pueblo, Colo-

rado, who has been honored with the Lifetime Business Achievement Award from the Colorado State University—Pueblo.

Keith Swerdfeger was born and raised in Pueblo, Colorado, and has had a lifelong passion to start a business and make a contribution to his hometown. In 1968, Keith realized his dream of becoming a business owner, opening Swerdfeger Construction, Inc. with his wife Sharon. This was the beginning of a very successful business venture. Today, Swerdfeger Construction, Inc. is a vital part of Pueblo's economy as well as in southern Colorado and six other states, employing up to 500 people. Keith readily gives all of the credit to his employees for his company's success, while continuing to strive to create more jobs and opportunities.

Keith is passionate about investing in the Pueblo community and firmly believes that part of his company's success has come as the result of the work he, his family and employees have done to give back. Keith has been very active with the Pueblo Economic Development Corporation, Pueblo County United Way, the Colorado Contractors, the Distribution Contractor Association, the Greater Pueblo Chamber of Commerce and other civic and industry associations. Keith represented Colorado House of Representatives District 47 from 2011 to 2013 where he served on the Economic and Business Development Committee, the Finance Committee and the Local Government Committee. He was a strong advocate for his District and the community of Pueblo and worked diligently to bring jobs and economic opportunities to the people of southern Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, Keith Swerdfeger has been a long-time business leader and tireless civic volunteer for his hometown of Pueblo, Colorado. I'm fortunate to consider him a dear friend. When we tell younger generations of Puebloans that the keys to a successful life are dedication and a strong work ethic, we can point to Keith as an example. Pueblo is grateful to have Keith Swerdfeger as one of its sons.

HONORING THE SHAVERTOWN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT MEDAL OF VALOR RECIPIENTS

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 16, 2017

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I honor the first responders of the Shavertown Volunteer Fire Department, who are being presented with Medals of Valor for their selfless acts to rescue lilou Warmouth earlier this year during a terrible house fire.

On the night of July 4, 2017, the Shavertown Volunteer Fire Department received reports of a massive fire consuming two homes in the nearby Dallas Borough. After arriving at the scene, the firefighters discovered that Mrs. Warmouth was trapped in one of the burning buildings.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.